

media release

Colorado Department of Agriculture

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Colorado Welcomes Mexican and Central American Produce Buyers

LAKEWOOD, Colo.-- The Colorado Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with the Western United States Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA), is hosting ten Mexican and Central American buyers September 26-28, first in the San Luis Valley and then in Denver. The objective of the mission is to help develop trade relationships with western suppliers.

“The agricultural industry in Colorado and the US has never been stronger,” said Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture John Salazar. “Strong domestic and international sales of produce are a critical and growing component of Colorado’s agriculture industry. We are excited to have new opportunities to continue to help our industry increase their sales both in the US and globally.”

The buyers are from some of the largest retail chains and distributors in Mexico and Central America, including Wal-Mart and Soriana. While in Colorado, the buyers will meet with potato, dry bean, onion and other produce growers and shippers in addition to touring potato warehouses and potato fields to observe potato harvests.

Colorado's vibrant produce industry had farm receipts of \$485 million in 2011, an increase of \$89 million (24%) over 2010 levels. Colorado's core produce including head lettuce, romaine lettuce, leaf lettuces, summer potatoes, spinach, cabbage, fall potatoes, cantaloupe, onions, peaches, and sweet corn continue to rank nationally.

The Colorado Department of Agriculture is also organizing the Colorado Pavilion at the Produce Marketing Association (PMA) Trade Show in October, connecting Colorado companies that produce and ship a variety of quality products with national and international buyers. Over fifty representatives of Colorado's produce industry will be at the PMA Fresh Summit in Anaheim, California, October 26-28, working to expand Colorado's U.S. and global produce sales.

International marketing specialists are available to assist in beginning and expanding Colorado's export markets. Assistance includes training for export operations, assessment of market options, international finance and accessing USDA funding support for exporters. For information, visit www.coloradoagriculture.com, call (303) 239-4118 or e-mail Tim.Larsen@ag.state.co.us.

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